



230161



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Testudines

Emydoidea blandingii -- Blanding's Turtle

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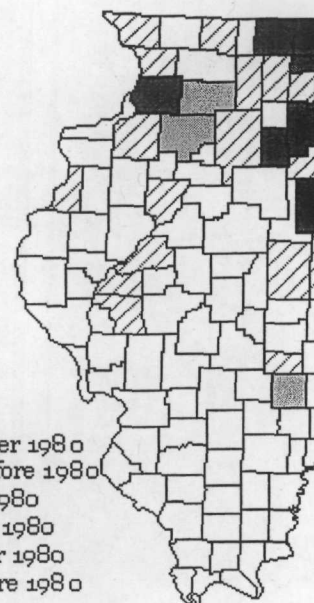
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Cook County, IL; photo by [Mike Redmer](#)



- Vouchered After 1980
- Vouchered Before 1980
- Photos After 1980
- Photos Before 1980
- Sightings After 1980
- Sightings Before 1980

Purple shade indicates vouchered specimens. Light blue (cyan) shade indicates photographic records. Yellow shade indicates verified sightings. Slanted hatch indicates pre-1980 records only.

NOTE: Not all specimens upon which these maps are based have been verified.

Key Characters: Bright yellow chin and throat; notched upper jaw; hinged plastron.

Similar species: Box turtles, spotted turtle.

Description: Medium-sized (up to 24 cm CL) turtle with dark shell. Head and carapace profusely decked with light spots and dashes. Each plastral scute patterned with a large dark blotch usually bordered with yellow but, in older individuals, entire plastron may be black. Pleural scutes of young unpatterned or have faint radiating streaks. Disproportionately longer tail than box turtles. Male with concave plastron, heavier tail with cloacal opening behind edge of carapace, and dark markings on upper mandible.

Habitat: Quiet waters in marshes, prairie wetlands, wet sedge meadows, and shallow vegetated portions of lakes.

Natural History: Usually found in and around water, but moves long distances overland. Long-lived, up to 77 years. Chiefly carnivorous, eating snails, insects, crayfish, and vertebrates. Female nests in late May and June, laying one clutch of about 12 hard-shelled, ellipsoidal eggs (ca. 30 x 20 mm).

Status: State threatened. Major threat has been habitat destruction. Relatively common in appropriate habitat from Illinois River northward. Rare farther south (see distribution map, above).

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Send Questions and Comments to: cbdadmin@inhs.uiuc.edu.
Last updated Wednesday, 07-Apr-2004 10:19:45 CDT